

What is the difference between a speed table and a speed bump?

Gwinnett County uses devices called speed tables, which are designed to achieve a specific result on vehicle operations without imposing an unacceptable or unreasonable safety risk. Motorists can travel along the street at speeds close to the posted speed limit with little or no discomfort.

Speed bumps, on the other hand, are abrupt devices designed to be crossed at slow speeds, and are mostly used in parking lots or private driveways.

For more information

If you are interested in scheduling a speed study, or would like further information about the Gwinnett County Residential Speed Control program, please use the contact information below.

gwinnettcounty
Department of Transportation
Traffic Engineering and Planning Division
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, GA 30045
tel: 770.822.7400 • fax: 770.822.7478
Contact person: Brent Hodges
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Speed Table Program

Gwinnett County will consider speed table installation on streets classified as local, residential streets, with a speed of 25 mph, after an evaluation of the severity of the speeding problem. Before speed tables can be installed, a petition will be circulated among the property owners along the affected street, with at least 70 percent of the property owners approving the proposal.

Although the Gwinnett County Department of Transportation recognizes speed tables as an effective method to reduce speeds, installation of this traffic calming device can be controversial.

This brochure serves to outline key points in the County's policy, and answer some common questions about the speed table program.

How does the speed table program work?

Once a complaint about speeding problems on a residential street is received, County staff will conduct a traffic study at the site. The traffic counter, with two tubes placed on the road, will collect the speed, volume, and direction data. Based upon the results of this study, County staff can determine the severity of a speeding problem and the appropriate solutions for this location.

Depending upon the results of the speed study, a speed table layout may be prepared and then sent with a petition to the citizen making the request. At least 70 percent of the property owners along the affected street will have to approve the layout, on a formal petition, before the proposal is forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for a public hearing. The petition process allows the neighborhood to make the decision if speed tables are the appropriate tool for traffic calming.

What is the cost to the homeowners?

The speed table construction and installation costs are paid from the current Sales Tax Program, with no other cost to the homeowners.

A maintenance fee, currently \$12.00 per year, is assessed on the property tax bill for each property on the affected street.

Where are speed tables located?

Speed tables are not used to slow traffic a given point, but rather to reinforce a safe speed along a street or street section. In most applications, they are spaced approximately 400 feet apart since studies in Gwinnett County and across the nation indicate that this is the most effective method to reduce the 85th percentile speed to between 28 and 30 mph. The first table in a series is located near a controlled intersection, to prevent a motorist approaching a speed control district at excessive speeds. Speed tables are not located on hills with a grade greater than eight percent.

Will stop signs reduce speeding in our neighborhood?

Stop signs are used to assign right-of-way at busy intersections. National standards have been established to determine when stop signs are warranted, taking into consideration traffic volume, sight distance, and accident history. Engineering studies across the nation have shown that multi-way stops do not work well as speed control devices. While speeds decrease in the immediate vicinity of unwarranted stop signs, speeds often increase between stop signs as drivers "make up for lost time," thus any effect that they have on speeds is purely local. Stop signs also increase air pollution, waste fuel, and create more traffic noise.

Most drivers are reasonable and prudent. When confronted with unreasonable and unnecessary restrictions, motorists are more likely to violate them, which often leads to contempt for other

traffic signs. For this reason, the Gwinnett County DOT does not recommend multi-way stop signs for speed control.

Why is a petition used?

Gwinnett County uses a neighborhood-driven approach to residential speed control. In order for the speed table to be effective, the installation should be supported by the property owners along the subject street. The County staff is responsible for managing the speed table program, while the residents are responsible for obtaining community support.

The petition is circulated in the neighborhood by the requesting citizen or other community representative. Each property owner listed on the title (for example, a spouse or if the deed lists "et al") is required to sign the petition. When a property owner offers to sign the petition, it is an indication that he or she understands the speed table proposal and the related information. A witness is required to verify each signature.

Why is the petition signed by only the residents of the subject street?

The petition coversheet, which should be read by all affected property owners, outlines the aspects of the speed hump program. The property owners of the affected street ("defined service area") will become a part of a special assessment district of properties that will directly benefit from the speed hump installation. Once approved by the Board of Commissioners, this special assessment district will be charged the annual maintenance fee on their property tax bill.

Residents on other streets will not be affected since they will not be within the special assessment district, and thus are not eligible to sign the petition.